

THE DESOLATIONS OF THE LORD— THE CONSOLATION OF HIS SAINTS NO. 190

**A SERMON
DELIVERED ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 28, 1858,
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ON BEHALF OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.**

“Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth. He makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder; He burns the chariot in the fire.”
Psalm 46:8, 9.

IT seems that everything Christ-like must have a history like that of Christ. His beginnings were small—the manger and the stable. So with the beginnings of that society which we love and which we believe to be the very incarnation of the Spirit of Christ—its beginnings also were small. But its latter end shall doubtless greatly increase—for has not the end of Christ become exceedingly glorious? He has ascended up on high. He sits at the right hand of God, our Father. And doubtless this agency which God now employs for the conversion of the world shall have its ascension, and God shall greatly magnify it! But as Christ was called to suffer, so must everything Christ-like suffer with Him. The Christian who is the most like his Master will understand the most of the meaning of that term, “fellowship with Him in His sufferings.” And inasmuch as the Missionary Society is like Christ, and has Christ’s heart and Christ’s aim, it also must suffer like Jesus. This year we have been made to sip of that cup—the blood of our martyrs has been shed. Our confessors have witnessed to the faith of the Lord Jesus—at the hands of bloodthirsty and cruel men they have met their fate, and again the seed of the church has been sown in the blood of the martyred saint!

I felt that in addressing you this day it would be far from me to offer you any advice or counsel when I am but the youngest among you all. But, by God’s grace, I pray I might be permitted, as sometimes the child does comfort its parents, to utter some few words of consolation which might cheer you in the present distress and nerve your arm for future combat with the great enemy of souls. And upon what subject could I address you which could be fuller of consolation than the present? *“Come, behold the works of the Lord.”* Turn from man’s bloodshed and behold your God at work! And from the desolations of rebellion and carnage and anarchy, turn your eyes here to the *desolations which the Lord has made in the earth.* You see how, though the battle bow still twangs with the arrow and though the spear is still imbrued in the heart’s blood of men, yet He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in sunder, and burns the chariot in the fire!

We shall regard this text this morning, first, *as a declaration of what has happened*, and secondly, *as a promise of what shall be achieved.*

I. First of all, we shall look upon it AS A DECLARATION OF WHAT HAS ALREADY OCCURRED. *“Come; behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth.”*

1. And now, let us commence the discussion of this part of our subject by inviting you to the sad spectacle of the desolations which God in His providence has in different ages brought upon many nations. As it is said of man, that he is full of trouble, so it is with nations. They also are full of sorrows and some of them exceedingly bitter. Wars have devastated countries. Plagues have thinned our populations. All kinds of evil have swept from side to side across the most potent empires and many of them have been compelled, at last, to yield to the destroying angel and they slumber with the mighty dead. Doubtless there has a wail gone up from the face of the earth when the invasions of barbarians have put

an end to the promise of civilization—when cities, renowned for the culture of the arts and sciences, have suddenly become sacked and burned—when nations that had made great advances in knowledge have been carried away captive and the sun has been made to go back many a degree on the dial of the earth's history!

I beg you now, turn your eyes and read the page of history and mark the various catastrophes which have happened to this world. And I appeal to you, as persons who have understanding and who can trace the Lord's hand in these matters—have not all these things worked together for good? And so far have not the revolutions, the destructions of empires and the falls of dynasties been eminent helps to the progress of the gospel? Far be it from us to lay the blood of men at God's door! Let us not for one moment be guilty of any thought that the *sin* and the iniquity which have brought war into the world is of God—but, at the same time, as firm believers in the doctrine of predestination and as firmly holding the great truth of a divine providence, we must hold that God is the author of the darkness as well as of the light—that He creates the providential evil as well as the good—that while He sends the shower from on high, He also is the father of the devastating storm. Oh, I say, then, come and see the Lord's hand in “Acel-dama, the field of blood!” Come and behold the Lord's hand in every shake of the pillars of the constitutions of the monarchies of earth! See the Lord's hand in the crumbling of every tower and the tumbling down of every pinnacle which had aspired to heaven—for He has done it—He has done it! God is present everywhere!

And now, I again ask—can you not see in all these things a gracious as well as a terrible God? Can you not feel that everything that has yet happened to the world has really been for its good? Wars, confusions and tumults are but the rough medicine wherewith God will purge the diseased body of this earth from its innumerable ills. They are but a terrible tornado with which God shall sweep away the pestilence and fever that lurk in the moral atmosphere. They are but the great hammers with which He breaks in pieces the gates of brass to make a way for His people! They are but the threshing wagons with which He does thresh the mountains and beat them small and make the hills as chaff—that Israel may rejoice in the Lord and that the sons of Jacob may triumph in their God! As it has been in the beginning, so it shall be even unto the end. The noise and the tumult of war in India shall produce good; the blood of our sisters shall be avenged, not by the sword, but by the gospel! On India's blood red gods, the arm of the Lord shall yet be felt. The might of Him that sits upon the throne shall be acknowledged by the very men who, first in the fray, have blasphemed the God of Israel! Let us not fear, let us not tremble! The end of all things comes at last and that end shall certainly be the desired one and all the wrath of man shall not frustrate the designs of God! The past troubles assure us for the present and console us for the future! “Come; behold the works of the Lord, what desolation He has made in the earth.”

2. But now, turning from this somewhat dreary subject, I must invite you next to look at some desolations which will always be *fair* in the eyes of the follower of Jesus—the desolations of false worship. What a pleasant theme! O that we had but power to truly enlarge upon it! Will you turn your minds back to the origin of idolatry and tell me, if you can, what were the names of the first gods whom men profanely worshipped? Are they known? Are not their names blotted out from history? Or, if any of them are mentioned, are they not a byword, a hissing and a reproach? What shall we say of idolatries which are of later date—those which have been noted in Holy Scripture and therefore handed down to infamy? Who is he that now bows before the god of Egypt? Has the sacred Ibis now a worshipper? Do any prostrate themselves before the Nile and drink her sweet waters and think her a deity? Has not that idolatry passed away? And are not the temple and the obelisk still standing—“The desolations which the Lord has made in the earth”? Do we talk of the gods of Philistia? Do we mention Baal and Dagon? Where are they? We hear their names—they are but the records of the past. But who is he that does them homage? Who does now kiss his hands to the queen of heaven? Who bows himself in the grove of Ashtaroth, or who worships the hosts of heaven and the chariots of the sun? They are gone! They are gone! Jehovah still stands, “The same yesterday, today and forever.” One generation of idols has passed away and another comes and the desolations stand—memorials of the might of God!

Turn now your eyes to Assyria, that mighty empire. Did she not sit alone? She said she should see no sorrow. Remember Babylon, too, who boasted with her. But where are they and where are now their gods? With ropes about their necks they have been dragged in triumph by our discoverers. And now in the halls of our land they stand as memorials of the ignorance of a race that is long since extinct! And then turn to the fairer idolatries of Greece and Rome. Fine poetic conceptions were their gods! Theirs was a grand idolatry—one that never shall be forgotten. Despite all its vice and lust, there was such a high mixture of the purest poetry in it that the mind of man, though it will always remember it with sorrow, will still think of it with respect. But where are their gods? Where are the *names* of their gods? Are not the stars the last memorials of Jupiter, Saturn and Venus? As if God would make His universe the monument of His destroyed enemy! Where else are their names to be found? Where shall we find a worshipper who adores their false deity? They are past, they are gone! To the moles and to the bats are their images cast—while many an unroofed temple and many a dilapidated shrine stand as memorials of that which was, but is not—and is passed away forever!

I suppose there is scarcely a kingdom of the world where you do not see God's handiwork in crushing His enemies. It is to the shame of the idolater that he worships a god that his fathers knew not. Although there are some hoary systems of iniquity, in most cases the system is still new—new compared with the giant mountains, the first-born of nature—new compared with these old idolatries that have long since died away in the clouds of forgetfulness. It seems to me to be a very pleasing theme for us to speak of these desolations that God has made, for mark this—again we say it—as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be! The false gods shall yet yield their sway. The temples shall yet be unroofed. Their houses shall be burned with fire and their names shall be left for a reproach. Their dignity shall not be honored; neither shall homage be given unto their name. O you who fear for the ark of the Lord. You who tremble at the firmness with which falsehood keeps its throne—look on these desolations and be of good cheer—God has done mighty things and He will do them again! One can never pass, even in our own country, a ruined abbey, or a destroyed priory, or an old broken down cathedral, without a sweet satisfaction. They are fair ruins—all the fairer because they are ruined, because their inhabitants are forgotten, because the monk no longer prowls our streets—because the nun, though she is here and there to be found, yet is no more honored! They are fair ruins because the apostate church to which they belong has ceased to have power among us as once it had. We will, therefore, seek to honor God and in all our journeys we will think of this text—“Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth.”

3. And now, in the next place, let me ask you to remember what desolations God has made with false philosophies. As for stones and timbers, they are things that must decay in the common course of nature. One might be apt to think that some of the desolate temples we behold were rather the trophies of the tooth of time, than of the hand of God—but *thought* is a lasting thing! A bold philosophy that shapes into words the wandering thoughts which have taken possession of the hearts of men is an enduring thing. And how have some philosophers believed that they were writing books which would be read for ages! They believed that their philosophy most certainly was *eternal* and that to the last day their disciples would be had in reverence! Let any classical student remember how many systems of philosophy have passed away before the progress of the Kingdom of Christ. The mighty Stagyrite, once the great master of all minds, who even held in sway many a Christian spirit, at last lost his empire before a purer truth of God! But I forbear to mention these things. I would rather allude to the passing away of false systems of philosophy in modern times, for there are some of our fathers here whose hairs have but just turned gray who can remember the rise and fall of some seven or eight theories of infidelity! You can look back and you can remember when it was a cursing obscenity with Tom Paine, having just also been the leering, scowling thing that Voltaire made it! You remember how it was the soaring, airy, speculating, scheming thing of Robert Owen—and then you remember how it became the base, groveling thing called Secularism! Men have trembled at that and have thought it will last. I believe I shall live to see the last Secularist buried, and that at the funeral there will be attending the leader of some new system of

infidelity who, despite his hatred of God, will have to say over the tomb out of very spite against the one who precedes him, "Here lies a fool, except a Secularist." You need not be afraid of these things! They live each a very little while—a new moon brings a new phase of the system. The thing that they have fashioned with the utmost diligence and which they deliver with the most earnest declamation; which they think they have proved with the sureness of logic; which they have built, as they think, upon a rock, against which the gates of heaven shall not prevail—how soon it is crumbled to dust and not a vestige of it is left—scarcely a remembrance of it—all is passed away and gone! And even so shall it be. As it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be. "Every tongue that rises against You in judgment, You shall condemn." The words of the wise are like the leaves of the tree of life, and they fade not. But the words of the wicked are like the autumn leaves, all withered, soon to become skeletons and be blown away by the blast, to be heard of no more!

Planted by the rivers of water, the tree of the church still grows, like a young cedar, fresh and green. But these things are like the desert bush—they see not when good comes. From earth itself they fail to draw their nourishment and heaven denies to the cursed thing its genial shower and, therefore, it soon dies and without a memorial it passes away. Be of good cheer, beloved! It matters not where the enemy attacks our entrenchments, they have been and they shall be routed. We tell the enemies of Christ to look to the thousand defeats that they have suffered beforehand. We warn them of their folly in attacking us again. Woe unto you! Woe unto you! Though you quit yourselves like men, you Philistines, you must, you shall be servants unto Israel! Woe unto you, for the voice of a king is in our midst! Your fathers felt our might. Remember who it was that cut Rahab and wounded the dragon. Your sires have trembled before us. Our fathers put 10,000 of your sires to flight, and we will do the same with you. And when we have done it, we will say of you, "Aha! Aha! Aha!" And will make you a byword with our children and a proverb with our menials forever!

4. But my text has a special reference to war—the desolation of war. Have you not noticed how magnificently peace wins its reprisals at the hand of war? Look through this country. I think if the angel of peace would go with us as we journey through it, and stop at the various ancient towns where there are dismantled castles and high mounds from which every vestige of a building has long been swept, the angel would look us in the face and say, "I have done all this—war scattered My peaceful subjects, burned down My cottages, ravaged My temples and laid My mansions with the dust. But I have attacked war in his own strongholds and I have routed him! Walk through his halls. Can you hear now the tramp of the warrior? Where are now the sound of the clarion and the drum?" The sheep are feeding from the cannon's mouth, and the bird builds his nest where once the warrior did hang his helmet. As rare curiosities we dig up the swords and spears of our forefathers, and little do we reckon that in this we are doing tribute to peace. For peace is the conqueror! It has been a long duel and much blood has been shed, but peace has been the victor! War, after all, has but spasmodic triumphs. And again it sinks—it dies, but peace reigns forever. If she is driven from one part of the earth, yet she dwells in another. And while war, with busy hands, is piling up here a wall, and there a rampart, and there a tower—peace with her gentle fingers is covering over the castle with the moss and the ivy and casting the stone from the top and letting it lie level with the earth.

I think this is a fine thought for the lover of peace. And who among us is not? Who among us ought not to be? Is not the gospel all peace? And do we not believe that when the gospel is fully preached and has its day, wars *must* cease to the end of the earth? I therefore say, beloved brothers and sisters, may we not console ourselves under all the recent outbreaks of a most bloodthirsty and cruel massacre, in the fact that God *has* made desolations even in war? He has made desolations in the earth and as it has been, so shall it be even unto the end! There is not now a rampart which shall not be sealed by peace. O you hoary bastions, you shall yet be destroyed—not by the cannon ball—but by something still mightier! Charged with love, this day we shoot against you the great guns of the gospel of Christ, and we believe that they shall move and shake you to your deep foundations and you shall crumble! Or if you stand, you shall be uninhabited, except by the owl and the heron. I have a fond belief that the day is coming when

Nelson, on the top of his monument, shall be upset, and Mr. Whitefield set there, or the Apostle Paul. I believe that Napier, who stands in the square there, will lose his station. We shall say about these men, "They were very respectable men in the days of our forefathers who did not know better than to kill one another. But we do not care for them now!" Up goes John Wesley where stood Napier! Away goes someone else who was an earnest preacher of the gospel, to occupy the place high over the gate where another warrior rides upon his horse! All these things—the trickery of an ignorant age, the adornments of a people who loved bloodshed despite their profession of religion, must yet be broken up for old iron and old brass! Every statue that stands in London shall yet be sold and the price thereof cast at the apostles' feet, that they may make distribution as every man has need. Wars must cease and every place where war reigns and has now its glory must yet pass away and fade and wither. We all give honor to these men now, for these are the days of *our* ignorance, and God in some degree winks at us. But when the gospel spreads, we shall then find that when every heart is full of it, it will be impossible for us to tolerate the very *name* of war! When God has broken the bow and burned the chariot, we shall break the image and dash the sculpture into a thousand atoms! We shall think, when the trade is done, the men that did it may well be forgotten.

II. I think there is enough to cheer our hearts and nerve us all for the great battle of Christ. The desolations of the past should lead us to hope that there shall be the like and greater in the future. And now I am to look upon my text and very briefly, **AS A PROPHECY WHICH IS TO BE FULFILLED.**

I would only needlessly occupy your time if I were to go over all my heads again, because really, every person will be quite as competent as I am to discern how what has been shall be in a yet higher sense. But we must observe once more, in noticing this as a prophecy, the figure of our text. It was usual, after a great battle and especially if peace was then firmly established, for the conquerors to gather up the arms of the vanquished into one great heap and then setting fire to it all, as Israel did to the spoils of Jericho, everything was consumed. One of these days, when Christ shall come in His glory, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ—not to say anything which would look like proclaiming the second coming here today—although, I most firmly believe it, and am sorry that we should ever have allowed in any of our missionary meetings any discussion upon a point which involves the faith of a great proportion of us. There are those of us who hold this to be as dear and precious a doctrine as any other in the Word of God, and we therefore think it unfair that we should at any time have anything said against it. When we meet together in the common bond of union for the spread of the gospel of Christ, we think it a sore thing that we should be attacked. However, leaving all that, whether it is by a spiritual or by a personal coming—we believe that one of these days we shall be awakened from our beds by one who shall say to us, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth." And when we arrive at the spot appointed, it may be, as the old Ephesians brought out all their books, and burned them in the street, we shall see our soldiers marching rank and file, and lay down their arms, and all that they have of murderous implements, piling them into one heap! And happy is that mother's child who shall be there to see it! But see it someone shall, when it shall be truly said, as the fire is kindled over all these things, "He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in sunder. He burns the chariot in the fire."

Happy will be the day when every warhorse shall be hobbled, when every spear shall become a pruning-hook, and every sword shall be made to till the soil which once it stained with blood! It is of that my text prophesies and my text naturally brings me to that as the great climax of the gospel. This will be the last triumph of Christ, before death itself shall be dead. Death's great jackal, war, must also die, and then shall there be peace on earth, and the angel shall say, "I have gone up and down through the earth and the earth sits still and is at rest. I heard no tumult of war, nor noise of battle." This is what we hope for. Let us fight on with diligence and earnestness!

And now, having thus enlarged upon my text, you will permit me to offer a few remarks on a more practical subject.

The question naturally arises, “Why has not this promise been more abundantly fulfilled in our own times?” Many say, “This is divine sovereignty.” Well, we believe divine sovereignty with all our hearts. It is a doctrine which we delight to dwell upon and always to acknowledge. But we cannot make divine sovereignty the great sepulcher for our sins! We cannot have it that everything is to be laid at the door of divine sovereignty. We believe there is a sovereignty that always overrules the sins of the church as well as of the world. We hold that in the highest and purest sense—but we think it is a very gross mistake for us always to be saying, if we are defeated, “It is divine sovereignty.” Israel of old did not say so. They looked for the accursed thing that was in the camp! They did not say, “Divine sovereignty,” when they were beaten by Benjamin—they inquired of the Lord! They were not content to say it was sovereignty. It *was* sovereignty, no doubt, but they desired to find another reason which, when discovered, might help them to remove the difficulty and enable them to conquer!

And now, beloved, there are many reasons, I think, why we do not prosper as we would desire in the missionary field. And permit me very briefly to hint at one or two. I shall mean no offense to any.

One reason is because we have not a thorough and entire unanimity with regard to the matter. Now, I know something of the Baptist denomination. I have wandered through every county of England, pretty well, and been to a great number of the churches and I grieve to see that there are many of our churches still standing totally aloof from the missionary field. If they stood aloof from our particular Society, I might not so much regret it, if they chose to have one of their own. But they have not one of their own either. There is this great thing for which I would blame them. That they should have some objection to unite with those whom they think to be different from them in doctrinal opinions would not only be excusable, but possibly there might be occasions when it would be praiseworthy. That any of us who hold strongly the doctrines of the grace of God and who, perhaps, give greater prominence than others to the truth of God as it was taught by Calvin and, as we believe, taught by Christ—should therefore have no missionary society—is a great and crying sin! And I really think that a defection of a large part of our body, however it may be caused, may be one reason why we have not had such an abundant blessing from God. You say you can do without them. Very well—so said the people to Joshua when he led his troops to attack Ai; they said, “Let not all the people go up, but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai. Make not all the people to labor there, for they are but few.” They thought it would be unnecessary and Joshua left behind him a large part and only took with him his strong, able-bodied men. But, together with “the accursed thing” that Achan had concealed, I believe that the lack of all the army of Israel was partly the cause of the defeat at Ai. So it is with us. Ah, if there is a means whereby we can get every Brother who calls himself a Baptist to unite himself with this society; if there is any method of love; if there is any way of making concessions; if there is any mode or any means whereby we all could be bound together in the holy brotherhood as a denomination—I think we are, each of us, bound to make it! As far as I am concerned, I may say that there is not to be found upon the surface of the world one more strongly attached to the old faith, as I believe it to be—the old, strong, doctrinal faith—coupled with the earnest preaching of the gospel to every creature! Yet I find myself not out of place in preaching for a Baptist Mission, nor out of place in helping it and throwing my whole heart into it. It seems to me it was founded by us—the very men who held these truths were the first leaders in it. And it seems to me the most strange and marvelous thing that any brother should, from his love to sound doctrine, stand aloof from missions! I am sure it is a stab against our prosperity as churches at home if we do not come forward to help the missions at large.

I am saying this because it may reach the ears of many of the brothers and sisters who are possibly not present today. I trust they will think the matter over. We do not ask them to come with us—we will be very glad if they will—but let them at the very least have a society of their own! Let them be doing something and do not let it be said that there is a Baptist existing who does not love to send the gospel to the utmost ends of the earth! That nonsense about God doing His own work and our sitting still and doing nothing ought to have been buried long ago! I know not how to characterize it—it has done us immense damage. We know that God has accomplished His own work. But He always has worked and al-

ways will work with *means*. The men who do not approve of working by means and stand by and say, "I do not sympathize with it," I do not wonder that God does not work with them—they do not deserve to be worked with! Let us cast away that and let us say, "If we can agree with these brothers who associate in missions, we will do so. If we cannot agree with those who associate in one society, we will do it somewhere else. But do it we will, for it is our anxious wish that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." But again, it is not all that, my brothers and sisters. It is a need of real love to missions in all our churches—and if this should sound critical and if any should say, "It is not so of the church of which I am a member," let it be so. I do not mean, when I speak generally, to include each individual. It is, I believe, one reason of our lack of success, or of that measure of lack of success that we have, that there is not a true love of missions in the churches that really help them! Many love missions. They love the cause of Christ. But they do not love Zion better than their own households. But as far as I can judge, there are many whose attention to the mission field is confined to that one day in the year when the sermon is preached. Some of them confine that day very closely, too, for the very smallest three penny piece that can be discovered is appropriated to the collection on that occasion! They love the mission, yes, they do—but their love is that old sort—of which it is said, "She never told her love." They never tell it by any contribution! They keep it very still in their hearts. We cannot think but that they do desire that the gospel should fly abroad, for they sing it with lusty lungs and with booming voices. But when there is anything to be done, they pinch and screw—the purse string is made half the ordinary circumference and it cannot be loosed! There is little to be given for Christ. Christ must take the dregs, the sweepings of their wealth. Ah, if our churches loved missions; if we had more of the true Spirit in our midst, we would find scores of our young men rising up to go out and preach the gospel to the heathen! And then the church, taking an interest in the young men who sprang from its own heart, would think it its duty to maintain its missionary and send him forth preaching the gospel to every creature!

I remember Edward Irving once preached a sermon upon missions to a vast congregation. I think he preached for four hours. And the object of the sermon was to prove that we were all wrong—that we ought to send out our missionaries without purse or scrip, giving them nothing! Edward never volunteered to go himself! If he had done so at the end of the sermon, we might have endorsed his philosophy. But he stayed at home and did not go. Now, we are not believers in that! We think that if a man *cannot* have help, it is his business to go without it. If a man loves the ministry; if he can only preach Christ's gospel in poverty, God bless him in his poverty! But as a church we cannot have that. "No, no," we say, "Brother, if you are going to a foreign land, and you give your life and health, and if you renounce the comforts of your family, we cannot let you go without anything. The least we can do is to provide for your needs." And one says, "There, though you go without purse or scrip, you cannot get across the sea except you have a ship; I will pay your passage-money." Another says, "You cannot preach to these people without learning the language. And while you are learning the language, you must eat and drink. It is quite impossible that you can live by faith unless you have something that you can nourish your body with. Here is the fund to support you; that you may give all your time to the preaching of the Word." Ah, if we did but love Christ better, my brothers and sisters—if we lived nearer to the cross; if we knew more of the value of His blood; if we wept like He did over Jerusalem; if we felt more what it was for souls to perish, and what it was for men to be saved; if we did but rejoice with Christ in the prospect of His seeing the travail of His soul and being abundantly satisfied—if we did but delight more in the divine decree that the kingdoms of this world *shall* be given to Christ, I am sure we should all of us find more ways and more means for the sending forth the gospel of Christ!

But to conclude. Perhaps I may say and some of you may with tears confess it is true—it is a need of a revived godliness in our church at home which prevents our hoping for any great success abroad! Ah, brothers and sisters, we must till our own vineyards better, or else God will not make us successful in driving the plow across the broad acres of the continents! We need to have our brothers and sisters more earnest in prayer. Look at our prayer meetings—a miserable handful of people compared with the con-

gregation—we need to have them more earnest in labor. Look at many of our agencies dying for lack of effective laborers when they are to be found—but they are not willing to come forth! Where is the zeal of olden times? We are not among those who say, “The former times were better than now.” In some respects they were, in others not so good. But if they were better, it is not ours to bemoan, but ours to labor to make them better! We need—gathering up all things into one—we need the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our churches at home! Just as the anointing oil was first poured on Aaron’s head, and then went to the skirts of the garment, so must the Holy Spirit be poured on England, and then shall it go to the utmost borders of the habitable earth! We need to have Pentecost at home, and then, Medes and Parthians and Elamites shall hear the Word of God! “Begin at Jerusalem,” is Christ’s ordinance, and it is Christ’s method! We must begin there. And as we begin there, in circles wider and wider and wider, the gospel shall spread till, “like a sea of glory, it spreads from pole to pole.”

Now, dear brothers and sisters, in repairing to our homes this morning, let us carry away at least one thought. Let us believe firmly that God’s purpose shall be accomplished! Let us hope joyously that we may be the instruments of its accomplishment! And then let us labor prayerfully that our wishes may be consummated. What is there that you can do today for Christ? Oh, if you love Christ, do not let this day pass till you have done something for Him! Speak for Him. Give to Him. But let each day be spent as a mission day, and be each day a missionary for Christ. Begin at home! Enlarge your charity. But first begin at home. Let your own houses be cared for, and then your own synagogues. And then, after that, you may send your missionaries to every part of the earth! I beg for a good collection today. It is the first time we have met together in this place, and there is a large number of us. If we do not give a right good collection today, we shall not save our own credit. That is a poor way of putting it. It will be a disgrace to us if we do not give well today. But besides that, if we save our own credit, we shall not approve our love to Jesus. Give as God has given to you!

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